Harassment of tribals in Visakhapatnam

1526. SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) the number of families evicted in different States and Union Territories for providing land in setting up development schemes during the years 2001 to 2003;

(b) whether all of them have got compensation and rehabilitation;

(c) whether a good section of tribal people in Visakhapatnam of Andhra Pradesh are being prescribed by the interested parties to spare their land for mining; and

(d) the extent of resistance by the people and the role of the Central Government as well as the State Government of Assam?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES (DR. DASARI NARAYAN RAO): (a) to (d) As per Government of India (Allocation of Business Rules, 1961), Ministry of Mines is responsible for survey and exploration of all minerals, other than Natural Gas, Petroleum and Atomic Minerals, for mining and metallurgy of Non-ferrous metals like Aluminium, Copper, Zinc, Lead, Gold, Nickel etc. and for administration of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Acts, 1957 in respect of all mines and minerals other than Coal, Natural Gas and Petroleum. The acquisition of land and other matters connected thereto for the different types of development schemes do not come under the purview of the subjects allotted to Ministry of Mines.

So far as the Public Sector Undertakings under the administrative control of Minstry of Mines are concerned no land has been acquired by them during the years 2001-2003.

Technology to extract mines from ocean floor

1527. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of OCEAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Department of Ocean Development has developed cost effective technology to extract mines from ocean floor;

(b) if so, details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that India has signed a contract with the International Sea Bed Authority for undertaking the work for exploration of poly-metallic nodules; and

(d) if so, details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A semi-continuous pilot plant has been set up at Hindustan Zinc Limited, Udaipur to validate a process for extraction of metals *viz.* Copper, Nickel and Cobalt from polymetallic nodules. The metal extraction technology developed is cost effective when the metal content of Copper, Nickel and Cobalt is 2% by weight in the nodule.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) As per the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, India has signed a 15-year contract with the International Sea Bed Authority for undertaking various developmental work pertaining to poly-metallic nodules. Under the contract, Department of Ocean Development is pursuing survey and exploration, comprehensive environmental impact assessment study in the area in Central Indian Ocean Basin, and development of technology for mining of polymetallic nodules from deep sea. Department has already developed a technology for extraction of metals—Copper, Nickel and Cobalt from these nodules.

Third Station in Antarctica

1528. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of OCEAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India is planning to set up its third station in Antarctica;

(b) if so, the location of the new site and the estimated cost of the new station; and

(c) the amount of money spent by Government for the upkeep of previous stations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) Yes, Sir. It is a fact that india is planning to set up its third station in Antarctica.